CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 18 OCTOBER 2000 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT BY THE OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION MADE ON 12 OCTOBER 2000 IN CONNECTION WITH OFFICIAL DOCUMENT CD/1625 CIRCULATED BY THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement by the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation made on 12 October 2000 in connection with official document CD/1625 circulated by the delegation of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

I should be grateful if this statement could be issued as an official document to the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to the delegations of all member States of the Conference and non-member States participating in its work.

(Signed) Vasily SIDOROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
Head of delegation of the Russian Federation
to the Conference on Disarmament

GE.00-63879 (E)

Statement by the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

The delegation of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has distributed document CD/1625, which states, *inter alia*, that the Moscow Joint Statement of Principles on Strategic Stability signed by the Presidents of the Russian Federation and the United States of America on 4 June 2000 contains a provision to the effect that there is a need to address the threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including missiles and missile technologies, "including through consideration of changes to the ABM Treaty".

It is incumbent upon us to point out that there is no such provision in the Joint Statement in question. Nor is there such a provision in any other joint document adopted by the Presidents of Russia and the United States of America. The United States is well aware that Russia has never conducted, is not conducting and has no intention of conducting any negotiations with the United States on changing the ABM Treaty with a view to adapting it to the American national anti-missile defence system. Such adaptation is quite simply impossible: the central provision of the ABM Treaty is to prohibit the deployment of ABM systems for the defence of national territory and the creation of the basis for such defence systems, and any change in this provision would leave the Treaty reft of its very purpose.

In our dialogue with the United States on START and ABM, we have repeatedly pointed out, and continue to point out in minute detail, the fatal consequences for disarmament and strategic stability which would result from the collapse of the ABM Treaty. Distorting - inadvertently, we trust - the sense of documents adopted by the Presidents of both countries will serve no constructive purpose. We call upon the United States to focus on joint positive work to safeguard international security and strategic stability while preserving and strengthening the ABM Treaty, as stipulated in the joint statements by the Presidents of Russia and the United States.

Moscow, 12 October 2000